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Preface to the special issue: Biomimetic Crystal Growth and Engineering

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Welcome to the *APL Materials* special issue on Biomimetic Crystal Growth and Engineering. The purpose of this special issue is to shine a light on the current work being done on the use of biomimetics in the synthesis of advanced materials. This issue is timely, as the field of biomimetics grows ever more interdisciplinary, drawing on Physics, Engineering, Medicine and Mathematics for deeper insights into the mechanisms of synthesis and modes of characterization of materials produced in this way. The possibilities of new and hitherto unexpected avenues of research realized at the nexus points of each underpinning discipline remains as rich as ever. By gathering examples of such work in a single special issue, we hope to provide a flavor of the depth and breadth of the field, not only for the researcher fully embedded in biomimetic research, but also for those new to, or curious about the possibilities that biomimetics can afford and the potential for extending their own work into novel and exciting areas.

The diversity of work across the discipline is reflected here in this special issue and it has been a privilege to work closely with the authors of these papers and to appreciate that the field of biomimetics is as vibrant and forward-looking as ever.

We hope that this special issue will provide enjoyment and intellectual stimulation in equal measure. It is our aim that you commend this issue to your contemporaries in order to further broaden the biomimetic research base. If your work uses biomimetic principles or practices, then we hope that you will consider *APL Materials* for your next submission.